

Iowa e-Health Connection

A monthly e-newsletter on the progress of health information technology and the health information exchange in Iowa



A collaboration to provide better information for better care.

Executive Director Update

Welcome to the March, 2012 edition of the Iowa e-Health Connection! During the last month, Iowa e-Health worked a great deal with legislators at the Iowa House and Senate. The Iowa e-Health bill has passed out of committee in both the House and the Senate with new bill numbers HF 2283 and SF 2166 respectively. The bill making it past first funnel is a positive first step and a hopeful indicator that the e-Health bill will be passed this session.

The Iowa Medicaid Enterprise (IME) recently notified Iowa e-Health that CMS approved the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) funding request to support the Iowa Health Information Network (IHIN). The HITECH funding, which will support the build of the IHIN, is provided through IME as a significant stakeholder of the Iowa e-Health collaborative. The IHIN will support many IME activities, including the EHR incentive payment program. Through the IHIN, Medicaid providers will have the health information exchange tools necessary to meet the information exchange requirements of meaningful use.

Iowa e-Health, in partnership with Iowa Public Health's Office of Rural Health, the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility (FLEX) Program, the United States Department of Agriculture, the Iowa Hospital Association, and Telligen, Iowa's Health Information Technology Regional Extension Center, held the first joint meeting of the Iowa Partnership to Enhance HIT Capacity in Rural Hospitals. During this meeting, held on February 9 at Telligen, the partnership began discussions about how to help rural hospitals in need increase adoption of health information technology. The Iowa Hospital Association will be surveying rural Iowa hospitals to help the partnership identify gaps in health IT adoption and related needs. Results of the survey will be used in the development of a state-wide, collaborative approach to provide resources to rural hospitals for health IT adoption and use.

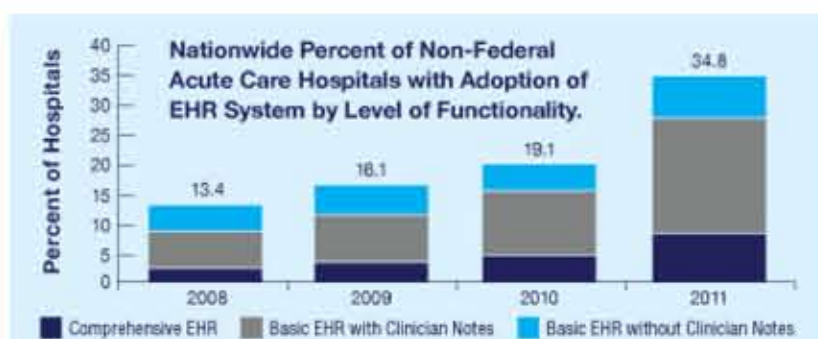
As March begins, Iowa e-Health continues to work with the IHIN vendor, ACS, to further identify project milestones and deadlines, particularly with regard to impending pilot projects. IHIN's early adopters are working to fit the new time requirements into their already packed project lists and are looking forward to receiving technical specifications to further develop their plans for IHIN connection. At the same time, a different group of members from our early adopter organizations are preparing to work with Iowa e-Health to begin development of patient education and outreach materials about IHIN functionality, including privacy and security considerations.

This is an exciting time for Iowa e-Health. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere appreciation to Iowa e-Health's many partners and supporters. With the continued efforts of so many in support of Iowa e-Health's work, it is especially easy to be optimistic about the future of health IT in Iowa.

-- Kim Norby, Iowa e-Health Executive Director

Calendar

- March 8: Iowa e-Health e-Prescribing Subcommittee Meeting, 2-3:00pm via conference call
- March 21: Iowa e-Health Privacy & Security Workgroup Meeting, 1-2:00pm via conference call
- April 13: Iowa e-Health Executive Committee & Advisory Council Meeting, 10:00am-2:00pm Urbandale Public Library



Iowa e-Health By the Numbers

National trends in EHR adoption show increasing use of EHR system components. The American Hospital Association (AHA) Information Technology (IT) Supplement to the AHA Annual Survey, funded by the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT, published results from the 2011 survey in February, 2012. Some highlights from the survey with regard to EHR functionality include:

1. From 2010 to 2011, hospital adoption of Basic EHRs without Clinician Notes has more than doubled, increasing from 3.5% to 7%.
2. Hospital adoption of Basic EHRs with Clinician Notes has doubled since 2009, increasing from 9% to 19%.
3. From 2009 to 2011, hospital adoption of Comprehensive EHR systems tripled, increasing from 3% to 9%.

Over the coming months, Iowa e-Health will be publishing several "Connectivity Guides" on the Iowa e-Health website that are intended to help providers bridge the gap to HIE connectivity. Additionally, providers should make plans to attend this year's e-Health Summit, August 8-9, 2012 at Prairie Meadows Events & Conference Center in Altoona, Iowa. It will be a great opportunity to learn about how you and your organization can prepare for connection to the IHIN.

Provider Spotlight: Elaine Berry, M.D., Cass County Health System



Converting from paper to electronic health records has been a long and sometimes bumpy ride for the physicians and other clinicians at Cass County Health System. But, Dr. Elaine Berry says the transition is starting to pay dividends.

Berry, who treats patients in the system's Atlantic clinic and at satellite locations in Anita, Griswold and Messina, can pull an up-to-date electronic chart for nearly every patient seen by the system's 12 primary care doctors and physician assistants.

"It's helped a lot," she said. "You have the entire chart always at your fingertips."

Especially helpful is the ability to access medication records, even from home, to determine if patients are due for refills or whether they are taking prescribed medications properly.

Berry says moving to an EHR system that meets Medicare's meaningful use standards has been a "painful growing process." Cass County clinicians have adapted to three different systems during the past 10 years. Records kept in the earlier systems still are being converted from paper or other formats so they can be accessed through the new system.

"Part of our problem has been learning three different in-the-office computer systems and then having to start over, start fresh, and you keep jumping back and forth," Berry said.

Still, Berry is confident the transition soon will be complete and that the clinic will be able to access even more patient information through the Iowa Health Information Network, including records of patients treated by specialists or in hospitals in Des Moines, Omaha and elsewhere.

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No Need for HIT Trepidation

Implementing a complete electronic health record system does not have to be a nightmare. Dr. James Holsinger is living proof. His success implementing a fully electronic health record system has earned the Keokuk family physician the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society's Davies Award for ambulatory care physician practices. The Davies Award is the society's highest honor for providers who have adopted EHR systems and have achieved meaningful use of their electronic health record.

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Enrollment Deadline Approaches for Low-cost HIT Training

Iowans interested in pursuing careers in the rapidly growing field of health information technology have until March 31 to enroll in grant-supported HIT Certificate training programs offered by Des Moines Area Community College and Kirkwood Community College.

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Alliance in Home Care Expo

The Iowa Alliance in Home Care will be holding their 2012 Annual Conference and Expo June 12-13, 1012 at Veteran's Auditorium at the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines. Registration will open soon!

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Iowa's Regional Extension Center Update

The Telligen HIT Regional Extension Center is the trusted health IT advisor in Iowa for EHR adoption and meaningful use. Their team of 10 field staff have prior hands-on EHR implementation experience and bring a combination of clinical and IT expertise to their roles. They provide technical assistance for primary care provider and critical access/rural hospital settings across the state.

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IME Implementing New EHR Incentive Program Attestation System

The Iowa Medicaid Enterprise's EHR attestation process is being moved from the Iowa Medicaid Portal Access (IMPA) system to a new Provider Incentive Payment Program (PIPP) system, effective April 1, 2012. To ease the transition to PIPP, the EHR attestation portion of IMPA will no longer be available to providers effective March 22, 2012 at 6:00 P.M. Once PIPP is launched at 8:00 A.M on April 1, 2012, providers wanting to attest to an Iowa Medicaid EHR incentive payment program must access PIPP and create a new user name and login. Usernames and logins created in IMPA will not be converted to PIPP.

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Xerox Retires ACS Brand

Two years ago Xerox acquired Affiliated Computer Services (ACS), combining Xerox's strengths in document technology with ACS's expertise in managing and automating work processes. Since that time, Iowa's health information exchange vendor, Affiliated Computer Services, has marketed itself as ACS, A Xerox Company. Considering the significant progress made in uniting ACS with Xerox, Xerox is now retiring the ACS brand in many areas of their services business and bringing together their services and technology portfolio under the Xerox brand.